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PRESS RELEASE

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Nigerian Citizen Sentenced for Committing Fraud Against World Bank's Federal Credit Union

Washington, D.C. - Perry P. Biayeibo, 43, a Nigerian citizen living in Fort Washington, Maryland, has been sentenced to prison for committing fraud against the Federal Credit Union at the World Bank, Acting U.S. Attorney Channing D. Phillips announced today.

Biayeibo pleaded guilty in June of 2006 before U.S. District Court Magistrate Judge John M. Facciola. Thereafter, he became a fugitive after failing to return to court, and the court issued a warrant for his arrest. Biayeibo was subsequently arrested on September 1, 2009. He was sentenced today by U.S. District Court Judge Colleen Kollar-Kotelly to 18 months in prison and five years of supervised release. Upon completion of his sentence, Biayeibo is subject to deportation to Nigeria.

According to the government's evidence, the Bank-Fund Staff Federal Credit Union ("BFSFCU") is located in Washington, D.C., and is federally insured. Between March 29 and April 3, 2006, three stolen checks totaling \$34,385 were deposited into the account of two BFSFCU members. The joint account belonged to two individuals, a mother and her son, Onochie Onwuemene. The three stolen checks were courtesy checks issued to three innocent MBNA Bank credit card holders, none of whom had given anyone permission to use the checks. Typically these checks are mailed to credit card holders to be used for whatever purpose they see fit. The three checks were returned to BFSFCU from MBNA Bank as they were listed as "stolen."

Once BFSFCU learned that the checks were stolen, it contacted the U.S. Secret Service. The Secret Service contacted Onwuemene, who admitted that he had deposited the checks and thereafter withdrawn money from the resulting funds on behalf of a man, later identified as Biayeibo, in return for a percentage of the funds. He met Biayeibo through a co-worker at a store in Rockville, Maryland ("Individual #2). Individual #2 approached Onwuemene about cashing checks for a friend named "Pee," who was a Nigerian citizen who allegedly could not open a bank account in the United States. Onwuemene agreed to cash the checks in exchange for a percentage of the funds.

Thereafter, on three separate occasions, Onwuemene received stolen checks from Individual #2 or Biayeibo, which he deposited into his BFSFCU account at a branch in Maryland. Onwuemene withdrew money from these funds on the first two occasions from a BFSFCU office located in the 2100 block of Pennsylvania Ave, N.W., Washington, D.C., but was prevented from doing so on the third occasion because BFSFCU had learned by then that the checks were stolen. Onwuemene took his portion of the withdrawn funds, and the rest went to Biayeibo, except for \$500, which went to Individual #2. Once the U.S. Secret Service was contacted by BFSFCU, it recorded a conversation between Onwuemene and Biayeibo when the two were seeking to withdraw funds from the third check. In the recorded conversation, Biayeibo admitted to writing the MBNA courtesy checks. The U.S. Secret Service also learned that, prior to the depositing of the three stolen checks, Biayeibo called MBNA Bank to find out the available credit limits on the accounts corresponding with the three convenience checks. Each of the three checks was written for an amount just slightly below the available credit limit for the respective account.

Onwuemene pled guilty on August 21, 2006, to a misdemeanor violation of theft from a federal credit union. On January 19, 2007, he was sentenced to 24 months of probation, ordered to pay \$19,256.83 in restitution, and to perform 200 hours of community service. Prior to sentencing, Onwuemene's mother paid the restitution in full.

In announcing these sentences, Acting U.S. Attorney Phillips praised the U.S. Secret Service agents who worked on this matter, who worked to both investigate the underlying crime as well as locate and arrest Biayeibo while he was a fugitive. He also acknowledged the efforts of Paralegal Specialist Mary Treanor, as well as Assistant U.S. Attorney Daniel Butler, who prosecuted these matters.

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